

a fine seam," but it does seem a grievous pity when we think of the exquisite work done by our grandmothers, and still done in some of the convents in France, Ireland, and elsewhere.

Surely, too, *every* girl (and boy, too) ought to knit stockings and socks—they may not be needed for home use, but can always be given away. Personally, I dislike having my hands idle, so always knit when I am reading to the children, and it is surprising how many pairs of even men's socks one can make in a term.

Then, again, why has tatting become almost a lost art? Really fine tatting is such beautiful work, almost as delicate as cobwebs, and it is not difficult, yet I have never met anyone (as far as I know) who can do it, except my mother and one of my sisters! I am ashamed to say that I have never learned.

For older children with good eyesight, pillow-lace is delightful, and does not require such neat, clever fingers as many handicrafts. I know many people think it strains the eyes, but if only done for a short time each day I do not think any harm would result. It is a well-known fact that in Bedfordshire, before the days of Board Schools, children were sent to "lace schools" (where, by the way, the parents paid 2d. a week for each child for lessons in *manners*!) at the age of 3 or 4, where they worked for three hours a day at first, then longer, till, at the age of 12 or 14 they were working at least six hours a day, and, of course, those who afterwards earned their living by lace-making were obliged to work *all* day to earn even seven or eight shillings a week; and yet you will find old ladies of 80 or more still working hard, in many cases even without spectacles.

I am afraid this paper is very long, but I have written it, as I said, in the hope that it will start a discussion.

E. R. TETLEY.

SOME EXPERIENCES IN GERMANY.

A few facts about ordinary life in Germany may interest you, and I have tried to write down a few of the experiences I had there, and to describe some of the manners and customs of the country which struck me as strange and different from our own.

There is much talk at present in the newspapers and elsewhere of the unfriendliness, not to say hostility, of Germany to Great Britain. We cannot discuss that question here, so I will tell you only of the great kindness which I met with in Germany and try to give some idea of the genuine goodness of the Germans when you know them personally. I met no one who was not cordial and friendly even when discussing politics—indeed, kind-heartedness is a leading characteristic of the German people to my mind—a sort of simple friendliness which one does not find just at first in other nations.

One of the things which struck me at once was what is often called the lack of freedom for the individual. In Germany there is conscription, and perhaps the military training which is so apparent everywhere has something to do with the strict rules and regulations about what seem to us mere trifles in every-day life, but which are punishable by fines and even imprisonment in Germany. For instance, in Dresden, where I lived, you may only play the piano or other instrument between certain hours; you may never walk on the grass in public parks; you must notify the police if any foreigner stays with you more than three months; you may not water your window boxes outside in case water falls on passers-by, etc., etc. The police are an all-powerful body, and enforce these laws with the utmost severity. Now, this may sound disagreeable to us who are accustomed to do just as we like, but after you have experienced the comfort of living in a German town where the streets are always clean and where the poor are not ragged and dirty as they are here, you see the point of the rules and regulations and do

not resent them, though sometimes you laugh at the "Red Tape-ism" which arises from them.

Perhaps the military influence may also be traced in the strict etiquette which is observed. Even students insist on formality to a very great extent: their elaborate bows and stilted phrases are often amusing, but if you neglect them you find it out to your cost. I had been told before going to Germany never to sit on a sofa unless I were specially invited, as it is the seat of honour. I treasured this piece of advice, but, sad to say, in the excitement of paying a first call in a German house and of thinking over what I should say, I forgot, and sat down on the sofa. Just as the lady of the house was coming in I remembered, and rushed to a chair. However, I was rewarded, for after shaking hands my hostess motioned me to the place of honour beside her on the sofa.

As to the family life in Germany, the style of living is, on the whole, simpler than in this country, though I see that the Kaiser sometimes bemoans the extravagant ways that are creeping into the country, but that is only in Court circles as yet. In towns everyone lives in flats or *étages*, not in self-contained houses. The rooms open into each other very often, and there are no open fires, stoves of white or coloured tiles taking their place. They give a good heat, but one misses the cheery glow of a fire.

The lady of the house herself superintends everything, going into the kitchen and giving minute instructions as to the work of the day and even doing some of the cooking at times. Her store of linen is always her greatest pride. As soon as a girl leaves school she begins to make pillow-cases, towels, etc., and embroiders her name on each. Even if she does not marry, this store of linen will be useful to her.

Germans usually have three or four meals a day. They begin with a cup of coffee and a roll at an early hour. Very often they have "second breakfast" at about 10 or 11, which consists of coffee and rolls with all kinds of sausage and eggs.

At 1.30 or 2 o'clock they have a large dinner, after which everyone rests for an hour. Soon after arriving in Germany I called on a lady between 2 and 3 o'clock. The maid opened the door with a horrified face and informed me that "the gracious lady and family were resting." I soon found that one could go nowhere at this hour, which is sacred to sleep! Very often there is no "coffee" in the afternoon, but at 7 o'clock or so there is a large supper. It is the fashion now to drink tea at this meal; the tea is very weak, just straw-coloured water; but if you ask for tea at a restaurant they bring it in a tall glass with lemon instead of milk—Russian fashion.

The food is hard to describe, for many of the dishes are quite indescribable both as to taste and appearance. The Germans are very fond of all kinds of sauces, and cook with a great deal of butter. Whipped cream plays a large part in the various dishes. Milk puddings—and indeed puddings of all kinds—are unknown, and their place is taken by cake; not cake such as we have, but large and round and flat, made of very rich, very delicious, but very indigestible things. The sausages which are associated with Germany are not like ours. The servant is sent to the butcher's to buy so many slices of this and of that kind, and they are cut off huge rolls of meat: we have no such choice of cold meats in England. Sometimes the housewife makes her own sausages. There are innumerable different kinds; most are very good even to the unaccustomed palate.

As to the servants, they are not nearly so well paid as our maids, but they get very large presents at Christmas and many tips. It is a bad system, and I was often sorry for them. Each servant has a book in which is written her name, age, etc., and when she leaves a place her mistress is bound by law to write her character and the cause of her leaving in the book. When she applies for another situation she must produce her book, as no lady would engage a maid without seeing it. Every mistress has to pay a certain sum,

in addition to her servants' wages, to a State Society, which provides, among other things, for those in ill-health.

Education in Germany is very thorough, and is all mapped out for girls as well as for boys, so that when a girl leaves school at about 15 or 16 she has had a really good education so far. For two years more she is generally sent to a finishing school, where she learns cooking, housekeeping, and everything connected therewith, besides studying the arts, etc. One of the most important stages in a girl's life is her Confirmation, or joining of the Church, which takes place when she is about 15. This is not important from a religious point of view only, but it means that afterwards she is treated as a "grown-up"—that is to say, she puts up her hair, wears longer frocks, and is called "you" instead of "thou" by strangers. For six months before the Confirmation she goes once a week to the Pastor's class and receives a thorough religious education. About Easter the Lutheran Confirmation service takes place—the boys wearing new black suits and the girls wearing new black dresses, with nothing on their heads, march in procession to the church. At a certain point in the service each one kneels before the Pastor, who repeats the form of service and says a text to each one, to be his or her motto for life. The scene outside the church after the service is striking. The family groups cluster round the black-robed, bare-headed figures of the newly-confirmed boys and girls; friends press up with small presents of bunches and pots of sweet spring flowers, expressing their good wishes for the future of the young people. At home a table has been laid out with presents, and all the family friends bring small gifts, generally made by themselves.

Girls who are going into service look out for places at once after their Confirmation, and boys take up trades, etc. The middle and upper class girls go to these finishing schools already mentioned, and the boys go to technical colleges or to the University. After a girl leaves the finishing school she comes home and helps her mother to entertain and do

the housekeeping. She also sews the wonderful trousseau of linen. Very often her mind is cramped and her ideas stunted by the absurdly narrow life she has to lead and the strict way in which she is looked after. Some girls are now going to the University, but they often abuse their unwonted freedom, so that the nicest girls find it hard to get their parents' permission to go in for study or for a profession. German girls marry early, German men do not, and the engagement and marriage are often entirely arranged by the parents. There is much ceremony and etiquette connected with the engagement as well as with the marriage, but it would take too much space to go into it all.

Germans prize their small family functions greatly. When a member of the family is going to have a birthday, there is much secret preparation of presents, for they must be made by the givers, not bought. On the morning of the day a table covered with a white cloth is laid out with all the gifts, and the birthday king or queen receives the congratulations of everybody. In the afternoon friends arrive with bouquets of flowers, tied with broad ribbons, and pots of flowers done up in prettily coloured paper.

There are three great holiday times in Germany, Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. At Easter the shops are full of Easter eggs of all sizes. Hares are a symbol of Easter—why, I do not know—and the shop windows are full of them, as well as chickens, nests, etc., and all the things one connects with Easter.

But Christmas is the great festival—to spend Christmas in Germany is indeed a privilege, and furnishes one with happy memories for years to come. There seems to be a really "Christmassy" feeling in the air long before the great festival comes round; not only a feeling of happiness, fun, and jollity, but a feeling of reverence and awe, which shows how truly the Germans enter into the spirit of Christmas, for they regard it as a holy festival.

First of all the house must be made thoroughly festive in

appearance, and a regular "spring-cleaning" takes place—carpets are lifted, curtains are taken down, chairs are polished, etc., until you wonder when it is going to stop. Then comes the great cake-baking. The German's "Christmas bun" is a very innocent affair compared to the rich, indigestible mixture which we in Scotland associate with Christmas! The German dainty goes by the name of "*Stolle*," and is really a sort of rich scone liberally mixed with raisins or almonds. Most "*Hausfrauen*" mix their "*Stollen*" at home and send the mixture to the baker to be cooked, as the correct shape is very difficult to get in small ovens. It is supposed to represent the Christ Child in swaddling clothes.

In the streets of the towns as well as in the houses, signs of the approaching festival are to be seen. Suddenly one comes upon what seems to be a magic forest of little fir trees which has grown up in the midst of the town. It has not been planted there by fairies, however, but by men from the country, and soon these trees will be transformed into wonderful "Christmas trees." In every shop window there are signs of Christmas. The toy shops are, of course, the chief centres of interest for children, but even in quite ordinary and prosaic shops there are things which would astonish English children. I saw in one boot shop an almost life-size figure of Santa Claus—or, as the Germans call him, "*Knecht Ruprecht*"—surrounded by angels who were helping him to distribute his gifts. In the poorest shops little figures of this kind are to be seen, and one feels they must bring pleasure to some of the poor who have not so many Christmas joys as their richer neighbours. About a week before the 24th, what is called a "*Jahr Markt*" is held. There are four of these in the year, I think. The country people come to town to sell their wares. They erect booths, and all day long are kept busy supplying customers, mostly of the poorer classes, with goods of all kinds. One popular booth is where sweets are sold. Queer figures of men and

animals composed of sugar and the ever-popular "*Honigkuchen*," a kind of gingerbread, are much in demand. It does one good to see the pleasure in the faces of the poorest there as they buy their little presents for friends and relations. In the large shops trade is also very brisk, and customers stand sometimes three deep waiting to be served.

At last the long-looked-for day comes. It is not 25th as we have it, but the 24th. The tables on which the presents are to be laid are covered with white cloths, and one of the family lays out the gifts, each person having his own portion of a table so that he may know where his presents are to be found. A service is held at 4 o'clock in the afternoon in every church, and long before the hour every seat is taken. Two tall Christmas trees, ornamented only by lighted candles, stand one on each side of the altar, and in the Lutheran churches these are the sole decoration. The chief feature of the service is the singing of the Christmas hymns, the voices of the choir boys blending beautifully with the music which is dear to every German heart. Service over, everyone hurries home for what is really the most important event of the day—the lighting of the Christmas tree and the giving of the presents: "*Die Bescherung*." I had the great good fortune to be present at a "*Bescherung*," and I shall never forget it. There were ten of us, I think, and we formed ourselves into a little procession, headed by two wee children, who sang a Christmas hymn as we walked through two rooms into a third, where in a corner stood the Christmas tree, decorated with candles and silver ornaments, and in front of which there was a long table covered with presents. What excitement and exclamations of joy were to be heard as each person examined his gifts, and how we all embraced and thanked each other over and over again! When the children had at last been sent to bed tired out with excitement, the rest of us had supper and spent a happy evening together. Thus ended the great December 24th.

The Christmas holiday-making extends to the New Year

also. This day is observed as a holiday and the New Year is brought in as in England. One custom which struck me as differing from ours was that on New Year's Eve, whilst waiting for the sound of the bells to usher in the New Year, we melted balls of lead in a flame, dropping the liquid into cold water, where it formed into variously shaped pieces, from which our fortunes were told. We walked home two miles from our friend's house, between 2 and 3 in the morning, having spent a most enjoyable evening. Finally, I recommend anyone who has the chance of going to Germany to take it, for I am sure if you meet with as much kindness and consideration as I received you will always look back upon your visit there with real joy and pleasure.

SARK, C. I.

"And midmost of the murderous water's web,
All round it stretched and spun,
Laughs, reckless of rough tide and raging cbb,
The loveliest thing that shines against the sun."

Thus Swinburne wrote of Sark in "Songs of the Spring-tide," and truly it ranks high among the beautiful places of the earth. Sark is a person to be known and loved; "the isle of the silver sea" she is called by one of her lovers, and many another name is hers given by those to whom she has shown her beauties and whispered her secrets. Her climate is perfect; when the rest of the world is hot and parched, Sark is a cool retreat; when outside storms blow and rain clouds obscure the sun, Sark justifies her name of "Sunny Sark."

In the summer of 1911, during the great heat, we sat in the sun on the top of the cliffs, kept cool by a soft sea breeze, watching the swimmers in water so clear that we could see every movement of their limbs, and beyond them every stone and boulder glimmering in the cool depths.

Sark is three miles long and about one and a half miles wide; it consists of Great Sark and Little Sark joined by a narrow neck of land called "La Coupée." Everything in the island is on a small scale; there are tiny woods, miniature valleys, hamlets for villages, and a population of about 500. Much of the island is naturally bare and exposed; the highest point, marked by a windmill, is 375 feet above sea level, and the land slopes from that place on all sides, very slightly, to the cliffs, which are high but softened, and comfortably clothed with gorse, heather, and bracken.

The day-tripper comes daily from Guernsey and about twice weekly from Jersey, but he comes late and goes early, and, when in the island, follows a beaten track, interfering very little with visitors who seek the beautiful rather than the famous.

Geologically Sark is interesting; it is conjectured that originally the islands were joined to France, but 14,000 years ago Guernsey and Sark became an island and so remained for about 9,000 years, when the sea, eating into the softer parts, divided Sark from Guernsey about the same time that Jersey became separated from the mainland of France.

The history of these islands, and consequently that of Sark, has been extremely varied and chequered. Nominally the islands passed into England's keeping with the coming of William the Conqueror, but for many years they were subject to invasions from France and were constantly at war, stubbornly defending their rights against great odds, but always backed by the natural strength of their island. Although on account of her almost inaccessible position Sark in battle was a great problem to her enemies, yet being smaller she suffered more than her neighbours. Several times after fierce fighting the island was left desolate, until 1565. That year one Hélier de Carteret, a member of the powerful Jersey family, "seeing the said island of Sark thus vacant and uninhabited as before, considered within himself that danger might happen to the island of Jersey as well as

of Guernsey, if the French again took possession of the said island; he considered also that if it remained uninhabited it would be a nest of robbers and pirates, who would always take refuge there to watch poor merchants who trafficked among the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, which in every way would turn to the injury and prejudice of the said islands." He determined to colonise it, and settled there with his family, bringing over settlers from the town of St. Ouen in Jersey. Later, Queen Elizabeth, recognising all that De Carteret had done for the island, created it a Fief Haubert, and gave it to him and his heirs for ever on payment yearly of a certain sum.

During the Civil War Guernsey supported the Parliamentary cause, while Jersey, influenced by the enthusiastically loyal De Carteret family, gave her strength to the Royalists; Sark, with interests divided between Guernsey as her nearer neighbour and Jersey as the original home of her benefactor, succumbed to the nearer influence and lent her small militia to Guernsey until 1660, when the De Carterets recovered their influence.

In 1721 the Seignury of Sark changed hands for the first time, being sold by the De Carterets, who were much impoverished by their efforts for the Stuarts.

The form of government established for Sark by Hélier de Carteret exists to this day, having suffered no fundamental change. He divided the island into forty portions, each of which passed to the owner's eldest son; any holder might sell a part of his inheritance on condition that he gave one-thirteenth of the purchase money to the Seigneur. Thus the Seigneur, even to this day, claims his right on every sale of land, and nominally the whole island is his, though he can never actually use it as his own. He also receives tithe, generally, I believe, paid in kind. One can see in the reaping every tenth sheaf thrown aside for the Seigneur; his also is the right of flotsam and jetsam.

To each of the forty holders Hélier de Carteret gave a

vote to be exercised in the "Court of Chefsplaids," in which the Seigneur has the right of veto but no vote. There are still forty votes, but fewer voters, owing to the fact that two or more original portions have passed into one family through marriage. Thus Sark resembles the other Channel Islands in being self-governed, but under the protection of the Sovereign of the British Isles, and this arrangement has always proved to be most satisfactory, it being possible that if the islands sent Members to Westminster, among many great problems, their peculiar interests might be swamped.

The people of the island are very simple and delightful; they belong to England and are proud of the fact; they are intensely loyal to their island, and being well aware of its attractiveness, the advent of as many visitors as the island will hold does not surprise them.

The language is probably the nearest approach to the French spoken at the time of the Norman Conquest by the Normans in England. It is quite difficult to follow, and one does not get much opportunity of becoming accustomed to it as English is now taught in the school, and the people generally like to show their knowledge of it.

I have not given an exhaustive account of Sark, and have purposely refrained from description, as the visitor only can see all its ever varying beauty and appreciate it to the full. The Island makes great demands upon visitors. We loved it in August, clothed in purple and red browns; longed to know it in spring, yellow with primroses and glowing with gorse; and in June when the bracken is at its tenderest green, the sea a deep blue, surrounding the island and every rock with a fairy ring of white.

Steamers from Southampton call at Guernsey about 10 a.m. (a night journey of six hours), in time to catch the little packet steamer for Sark, which leaves Guernsey at 10 a.m. (fare 2s.). The boat from Weymouth takes four hours, arrives about 4 p.m., and necessitates spending a night in Guernsey, or hiring a motor-boat to Sark. This boat

belongs to a man in Sark, and can only run in smooth weather. St. Peter's Port is a delightful old town, and Guernsey is well worth a few days' visit.

Hotels in Sark, daily charge about 8s. each person. Belle Air. Stocks. Dixcart.

Paying guests are taken at the Vicarage.

We saw a house with one sitting-room, a kitchen, and three bedrooms, which we could rent furnished for $2\frac{1}{2}$ guineas per week. This may be an indication of the cost of a house there.

It is possible to get rooms, but as the accommodation is limited, it is well to apply early. We booked at Stocks in March for August.

BOOKS.

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"Flora of Guernsey and the Lesser Channel Isles." By E. D. Marquand.

"Birds of Guernsey, Alderney, Sark, Herm, and Jethou." By Cecil Smith, 1879.

"The Book of Sark." By John Oxenham. Illustrated in colour.

"The Battle of the Strong." By Gilbert Parker.

"Travailleurs de la Mer." By Victor Hugo.

"Songs of the Springtide." By Swinburne.

E. FROST.